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**NASA TECHNICAL
MEMORANDUM**

NASA TM-82429

**ASSEMBLY AND TESTING OF 1/4 INCH MR54040 TF04
RESISTOFLEX DYNATUBE FITTINGS**

**By J. H. Ehl
Materials and Processes Laboratory**

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*George C. Marshall Space Flight Center
Marshall Space Flight Center, Alabama*

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16. ABSTRACT Installation of Resistoflex dynatube fittings on $\frac{1}{4}$ in. tubing is sensitive to workmanship and to the state of repair of the installation tooling. Tooling with very slight out-of-specification imperfections will produce less than optimum swaged fittings. This investigation included fabrication of a significant quantity of samples, X-rays to determine the depth of swage and static and dynamic testing to determine joint performance.			
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Walter W. Jackson	EE11
Elbert Minter	EH44
Leo Hein	EP33
Wendel DeWeese	EH22
Edward Ball	ET44
Alex D'Agostino	EP42
Philip Taylor	USBI Huntsville
Toney Bridges	SK-QAL
Joe Kinsley	USBI M-BAC
James Calloun	SK-SRB-E
Bobby Erwin	ED-23
Clifton Kirby	ET-19

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

ASSEMBLY AND PERFORMANCE OF 1/4 INCH MR54040 TF04 RESISTOFLEX DYNATUBE FITTINGS

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Dynatube is a trade name for a titanium (6 Al-4V) threaded fitting used to join metal tubing (Figs. 1 and 2). These fitting are manufactured by the Resistoflex Corporation of Rcseland, N.J. The outside surface of the metal tube is mechanically swaged into grooves in the inside surface of the fitting. Swaging is performed either by manual or power rotation of an expanding mandrel type tool (Figs. 3 and 4). These fittings have a long history of successful use in commercial and military aircraft and aerospace systems with minimum weight and critical leak rate requirements.

During build-up of hardware for the Space Shuttle Thrust Vector Control (TVC) system, some tube assemblies using Dynatube fittings⁻⁵ were fabricated that did not pass the prescribed leak test of 1×10^{-5} standard cubic centimeters per second of helium at 400 psig. Leakage was detected between the fitting and the outside diameter of the tube. These tests were conducted using a helium sniffer and also by using "Leak Tek" solution and noting bubbles of escaping helium gas. It was determined that these same tube assemblies had previously passed the leak test requirements. Fittings are tested repeatedly as build-up of the assembly progresses to the next higher level. Sectioning of the leaking joint revealed a very light swage of less than 0.002 in. radial deformation of the tube into the fitting grooves which are 0.007 in. deep. Further investigation revealed that some lightly swaged fittings had passed all hydrostatic leak testing but could be made to leak if they were rotated on the tube during installation (Figs. 5 and 6).

Further investigation determined that Dynatube fitting assemblies had been made using swage tooling that was worn and/or misassembled. The worn tooling swaged light, as little as 0.002 in. deep in the four 0.007 in. deep fitting joints. The misassembled swage tool swaged short, i.e. good swages in the first three grooves but little or no swage in the farthest groove (4th groove) from the point of entry of the mandrel into the tube to be swaged. Refurbishment of the tooling by replacing the worn rollers on the expanding mandrel and by correcting the out of place spacer washers in the misassembled tool corrected the problem of swaging good joints. Correctly assembled and refurbished tooling can consistently swage grooves 0.005 in. deep or more when used by a trained operator. However, x-ray of in-place tubing assemblies revealed

that some joints had been manufactured and installed that were lightly swaged and that had successfully passed the helium leak tests. A program was developed to determine the performance of lightly swaged joints and to duplicate and test joints equal to or worse than those known to be installed on the flight TVC hardware. This program was comprised of the following:

- 1) To be statistically meaningful, 100 each $\frac{1}{4}$ in. fittings were procured and fabricated into 50 each tube assemblies with one fitting at each end (Fig. 1).
- 2) All swage tooling was refurbished by the Resistoflex Corporation to the correct company specifications.
- 3) A tolerance study was made on the tubing, the tooling, and the fitting to determine the worst case swage that could be made (Appendix). Swages were made at minimum possible, medium range, and full depth. Additionally, samples were prepared that were fully swaged, but swaged short. Swage tool settings to accomplish these conditions were 0.219, 0.221, 0.223, 0.225, and 0.228 in. The 0.228 in. setting is the normal setting recommended by Resistoflex Corporation for these fittings. All samples were measured (I.D.) x-rayed to determine amount of swage, proof pressure tested at 7000 psi, mass spectrometer leak tested (sniffer method) at 400 psi with helium, rotated 15° in the fitting to simulate a careless fit-up, re-leak checked, and pressure tested. After rotation, approximately 25 percent of the samples did not pass the helium leak. These were assembled into a closed loop arrangement and pressurized at 400 psi with water. The pressure was maintained for two weeks. None of the swaged fittings that leaked helium, leaked water during the two weeks under pressure.

After static testing, the tubes were vibration tested to Shuttle flight level in the radial, tangential, and longitudinal axis (Table 1). While being vibrated, all tubes were pressurized at 400 psi with water containing red dye to enhance visibility in case of a leak. Sixty each fittings, including all the shallow swages and all the short swages, were tested. None leaked water at 400 psi during the vibration tests which simulated flight conditions.

2. FINDINGS

- 1) Resistoflex Dynatube swage tooling in the proper state of repair and used properly will consistently yield adequate swages. (0.005 or more in the first three grooves.)
- 2) The light and short swage conditions found were caused by worn and improperly assembled tooling respectively.

3) The inhouse MSFC test program demonstrated that a MR54040 TF04 swage joint with at least 0.0015 in. radial tube deformation, while not desirable, will pass the required leak rate of not more than 1×10^{-5} scc's helium at 400 psig. Additionally this joint will not leak water when pressurized to 400 psi and vibrated to 28.2 grms composite in the radial and tangential axis and 27.0 grms composite in the longitudinal axis.

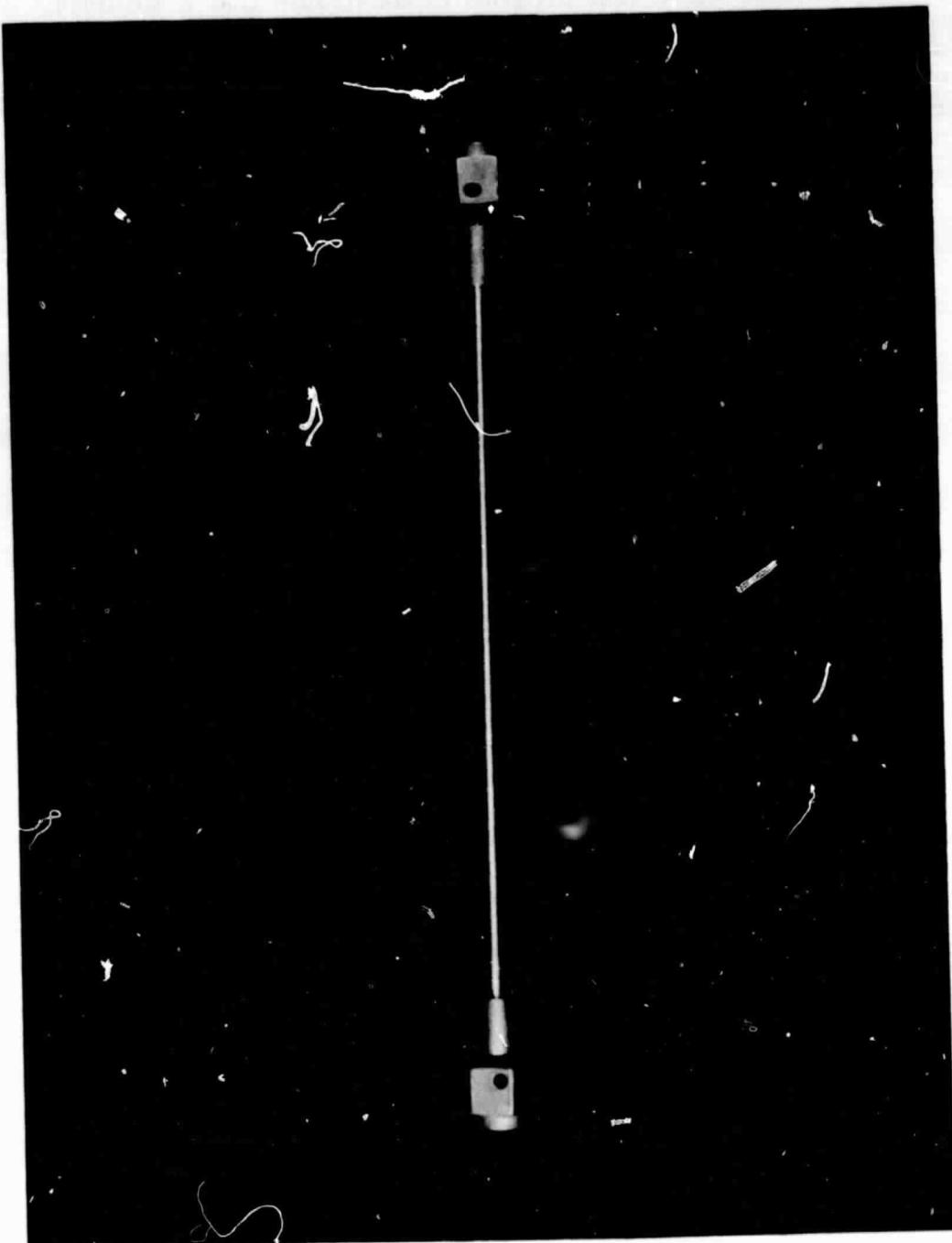
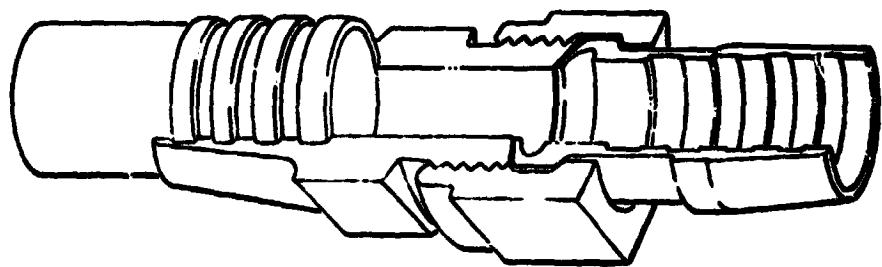


Figure 1. 4 inch 304L stainless steel tube with MR54050 TF04 fitting each end.

ORIGINAL PAGE IS
OF POOR QUALITY

SWAGED TUBE



6AL -4V DYNATUBE FITTING

Figure 2. MR 54040 TF04 dynatube fitting.

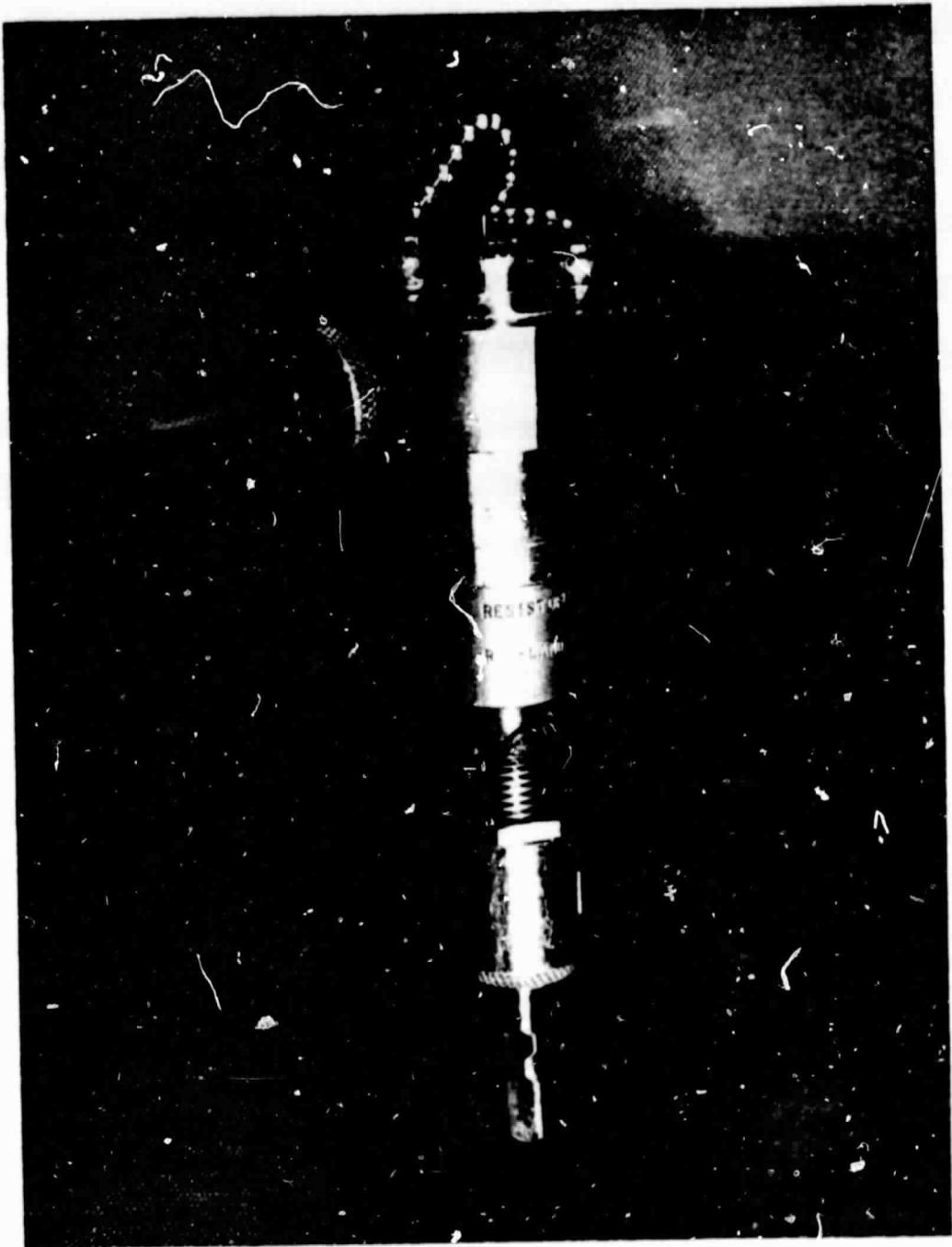


Figure 3. Swage tool (fully assembled).

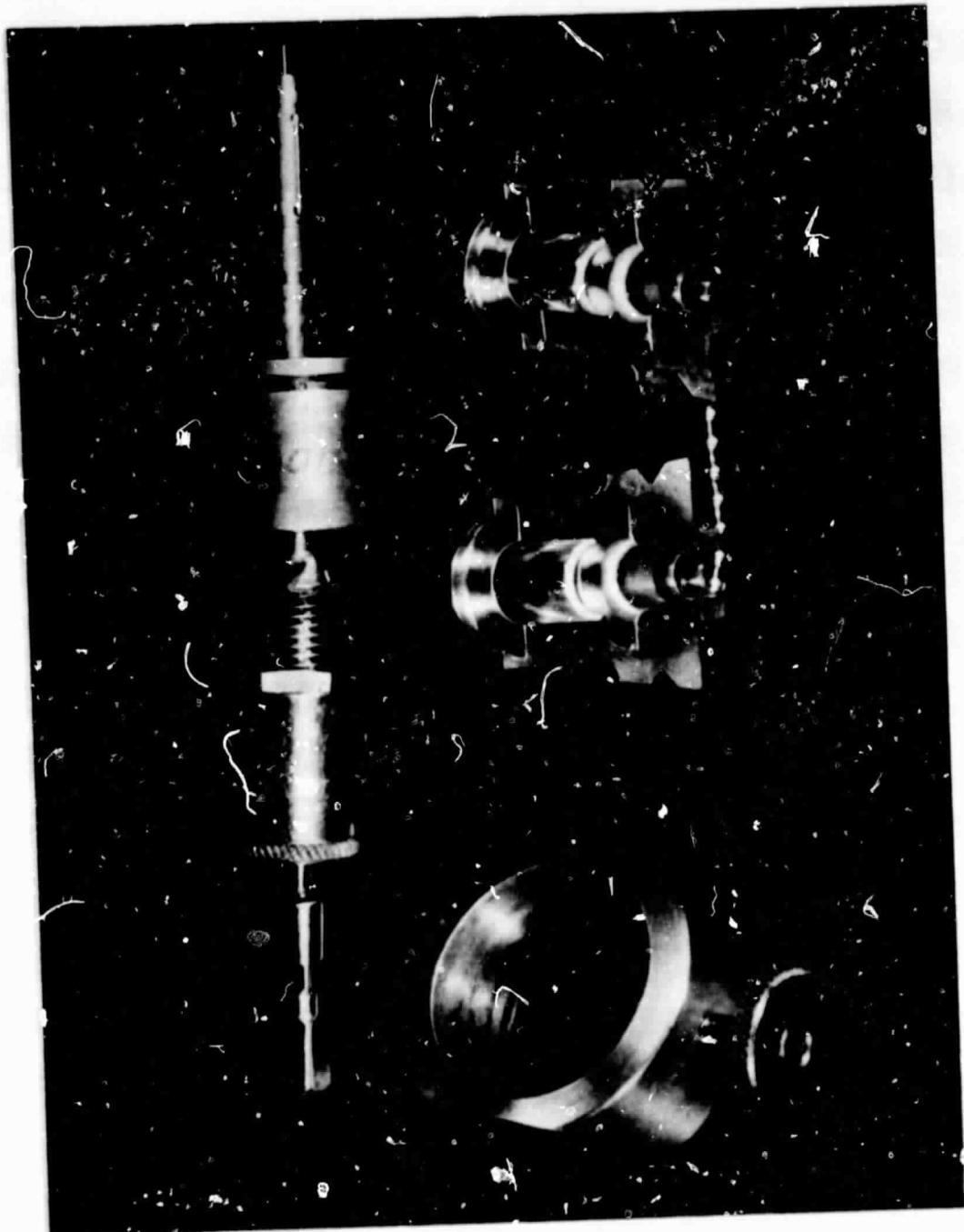


Figure 4. Swage tool (disassembled).

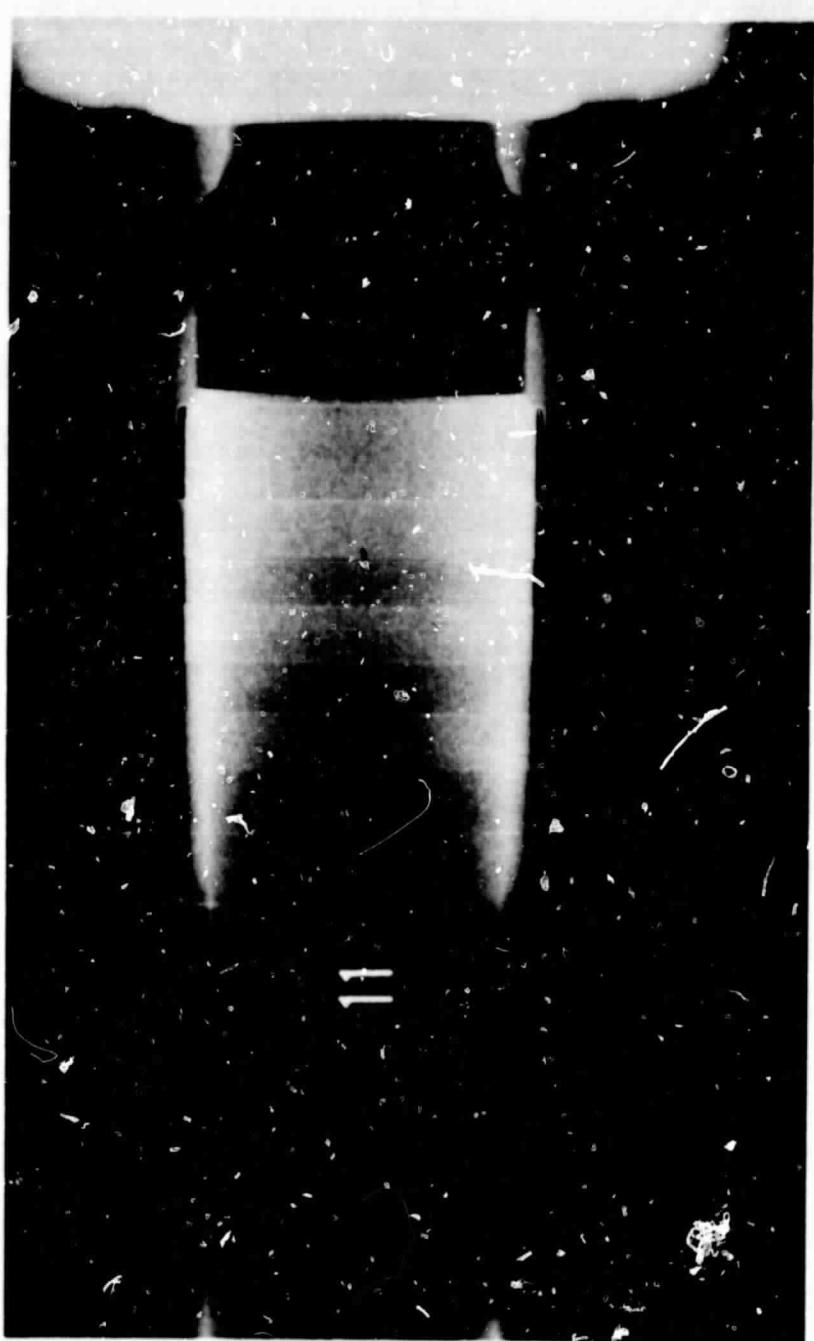
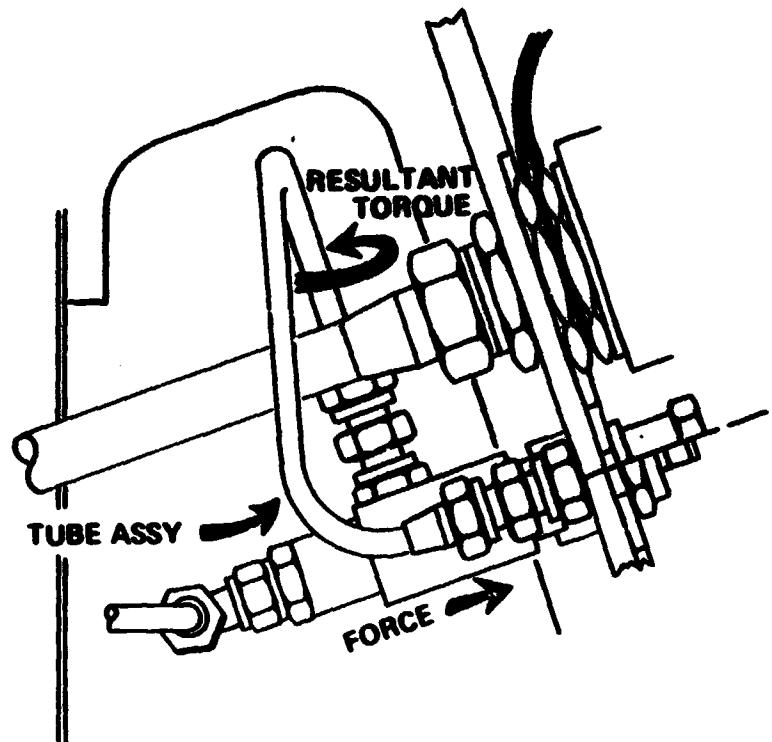


Figure 5. Enlarged x-ray of fitting and tube showing minimal swage of tube into fitting grooves.



ROTATING THE TUBE IN THE SWAGE FITTING COULD OCCUR DURING INSTALLATION WHEN ONE END OF THE ASSEMBLY HAS BEEN SECURED THEN THE OTHER END IS DRAWN AGAINST ITS MATING FITTING CAUSING A ROTATIONAL TORQUE ON THE OPPOSITE END.

Figure 6. Example of possible rotation.

APPENDIX

TOLERANCE ANALYSIS

FITTING

Resistoflex MR54040

TUBE

MIL-T-6845C

Size Range Outside Diameter (Inch)	Tolerance
½ thru 1 INCL	+.004 - .000
over ½ thru 1½	+.005 - .000
over 1½ thru 2½	+.010 - .000
over 2½ thru 3	+.010 - .010
over 3 thru 5	+.015 - .015

Tube OD: .250 ^{+.004}
 -.000

Tube Wall: .020 ± .002 = .040 ± .004 cumulative

$$\begin{array}{r}
 .250 \quad ^{+.004} \\
 \quad \quad \quad -.000 \\
 \hline
 - .040 \quad ^{+.004} \\
 \hline
 \text{Tube ID} = \quad .210 \quad ^{+.008} \\
 \quad \quad \quad -.004
 \end{array}$$

Test Gage
 Diameter .224 ± .002
 Tube Wt. +.040 ± .004

Range .264 ± .006
 Fitting ID -.255 ± .002
.009 ± .008

This tolerance guarantees positive interference fit even if (in the unlikely event) the tube is the smallest possible, with the thinnest wall permissible, and the fitting is at the extreme upper limit. Factors such as spring back and wall thinning are handled by adding an additional .004 inch extra expansion to tool settings.

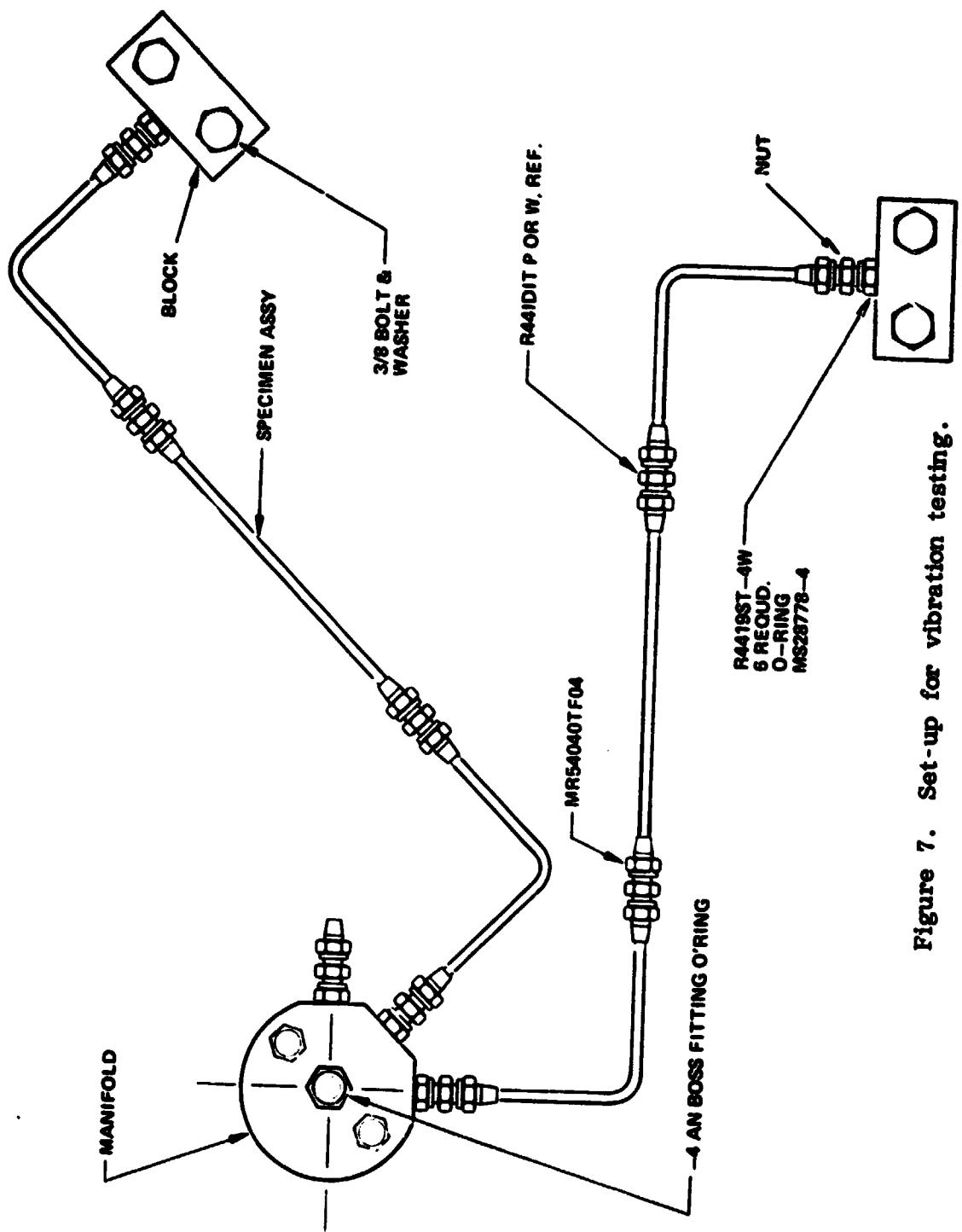


Figure 7. Set-up for vibration testing.

TABLE 1. VIBRATION INPUT TO SRB TVC TUBE (0.25" Dia.) ASSEMBLIES

**Lift-off and Boost Random Vibration Criteria
(180 seconds in each axis)**

RADIAL AXIS	LONGITUDINAL AXIS
20 Hz @ 0.1 g ² /Hz	20- 60 Hz @ 0.1 g ² /Hz
20- 60 Hz @ +7 dB/oct	60- 200 Hz @ +5.5 dB/oct
60- 150 Hz @ 1.2 g ² /Hz	200- 400 Hz @ 0.9 g ² /Hz
150-2000 Hz @ -2 dB/oct	400-2000 Hz @ -4 dB/oct
2000 Hz @ 0.2 g ² /Hz	2000 Hz @ 0.1 g ² /Hz
Composite = 28.2 grms	Composite = 27.0 grms
TANGENTIAL AXIS	
20- 60 Hz @ 0.1 g ² /Hz	
60- 100 Hz @ 13.5 dB/oct	
100- 300 Hz @ 1.0 g ² /Hz	
300-2000 Hz @ -3.5 dB/oct	
2000 Hz @ 0.1 g ² /Hz	
Composite = 28.6 grms	

EXPLANATION OF TABLE 2

The data contained in Table 2 denote the specimen number, the fitting on each end (No. 1 and No. 2) of the tube, the tube diameter in inches, and the swage tool setting in inches. The depth of swage per groove determination was made by evaluation of x-rays using an optical comparator. The No. 1 groove is the first groove from the sealing surface and the No. 4 groove is the last groove on the tube end of the fitting. The x-ray is a cross sectional view and the reading is left to right top and bottom. The determination was made by positioning the fine line of the optical comparator on the land of the groove and reading the amount of upset of the tube into the fitting groove. The tube internal diameter of swage was made using an internal micrometer with a stop to ensure that all tubes were measured at the same position. The column noting helium leakage determines if the fitting leaked in excess of 1×10^{-5} scc's of helium at 400 psig. Next, the fitting was rotated 15 degrees on the tube to simulate a careless assembly (Fig. 6). After rotation the fitting was rechecked with the mass spectrometer to determine leakage. The remaining data column denotes those fittings selected for vibration testing.

TABLE 2. RESISTOFLEX DYNATUBE MSFC TESTING

RESISTOFLEX DYNATUBE MSFC TESTING										• SEALING SURFACE TO LEFT	
FITTING #	TUBE #	ID	OD	SWAGE TOOL SETTING	• DEPTH OF SWAGE PER GROOVE #				TESTER NO.	TESTED VIBRATION NO. TESTED	COMMENTS
					TOP LEFT → RIGHT	BOTTOM LEFT → RIGHT	1	2	3	4	
1	.253	.205	.250	.219	.005	.000	.000	.005	.000	.000	.2168
	2	.253	.204	.250	.219	.002	.000	.000	.002	.000	.2168
2	.254	.203	.250	.219	.002	.000	.000	.002	.000	.000	.217
	2	.255	.204	.250	.219	.002	.000	.000	.002	.000	.2168
3	.254	.204	.250	.219	.001	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.2167
	2	.254	.204	.250	.219	.001	.001	.000	.001	.000	.2167
4	.254	.204	.250	.219	.001	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.2168
	2	.253	.204	.250	.219	.001	.000	.000	.001	.000	.217
5	.254	.204	.250	.219	.001	.001	.000	.000	.001	.000	.2168
	2	.254	.203	.250	.219	.001	.000	.000	.001	.000	.2172
6	1	.254	.207	.250	.219	.002	.001	.000	.002	.001	.000
	2	.254	.207	.250	.219	.001	.000	.000	.002	.000	.217
7	1	.253	.206	.250	.221	.0025	.001	.000	.0025	.001	.000
	2	.253	.206	.250	.221	.0025	.002	.001	.0025	.002	.219

*Sealing surface to left.

TABLE 2. (Continued)

FITTING #	TUBE I.D.	TUBE O.D.	SWAGE SETTING	*DEPTH OF SWAGE PER GROOVE #								COMMENTS
				TOP LEFT → RIGHT				BOTTOM LEFT → RIGHT				
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4				
8	1 .253	.202	.250	.221	.003	.002	.001	.000	.003	.002	.001	.000
	2 .253	.202	.250	.221	.003	.002	.001	.000	.003	.002	.001	.001
9	1 .254	.202	.250	.221	.003	.002	.001	.000	.003	.002	.001	.000
	2 .254	.201	.250	.221	.003	.002	.001	.000	.003	.002	.001	.000
10	1 .254	.204	.250	.221	.003	.002	.001	.000	.003	.002	.001	.000
	2 .254	.204	.250	.221	.003	.002	.001	.000	.003	.002	.001	.000
11	1 .254	.207	.250	.219	.001	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000
	2 .255	.206	.250	.219	.001	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000
12	1 .253	.207	.250	.221	.004	.003	.002	.001	.004	.003	.003	.000
	2 .254	.206	.250	.221	.003	.002	.001	.000	.003	.002	.002	.001
13	2 .254	.198	.250	.221	.003	.002	.001	.000	.003	.002	.001	.000
	1 .254	.208	.250	.221	.003	.002	.001	.001	.003	.002	.001	.001
14	2 .253	.208	.250	.221	.003	.002	.001	.000	.003	.002	.001	.000

*Sealing surface to left.

TABLE 2. (Continued)

FITTING #	TUBE #	TUBE I.D.	TUBE O.D.	SWAGE TOOL SETTING	*DEPTH OF SWAGE PER GROOVE #								COMMENTS			
					TOP LEFT → RIGHT				BOTTOM LEFT → RIGHT							
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4							
15	1	.253	.206	.250	.221	.003	.002	.001	.001	.002	.001	.001	.2168	X X X		
	2	.254	.207	.250	.221	.003	.002	.001	.001	.002	.001	.001	.018	X X X		
16	1	.253	.200	.250	.221	.003	.002	.001	.001	.003	.002	.001	.2168	X X X		
	2	.253	.203	.250	.221	.003	.002	.001	.001	.004	.003	.002	.2183	X X X		
17	1	.254	.202	.250	.221	.003	.002	.001	.001	.003	.002	.001	.219	X X X		
	2	.255	.202	.250	.221	.003	.002	.001	.001	.003	.002	.001	.219	X X X		
18	1	.253	.206	.250	.223	.005	.004	.004	.004	.003	.005	.004	.004	.2193	X X X	
	2	.252	.206	.250	.223	.005	.004	.004	.004	.003	.005	.004	.003	.2192	X X X	
19	1	.253	.207	.250	.223	.005	.004	.004	.004	.003	.003	.005	.004	.004	.2198	X X X
	2	.253	.206	.250	.223	.005	.004	.004	.004	.003	.005	.004	.003	.2198	X X X	
20	1	.254	.205	.250	.223	.005	.004	.004	.004	.003	.005	.004	.003	.220	X X X	
	2	.253	.208	.250	.223	.005	.004	.004	.004	.003	.005	.004	.003	.2204	X X X	
21	1	.254	.206	.250	.219	.001	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000	.2166	X X X	
	2	.254	.206	.250	.219	.001	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000	.2168	X X X	

*Sealing surface to left.

TABLE 2. (Continued)

FITTING #	TUBE ID	TUBE OD	SWAGE TOOL	SWAGE SETTING	* DEPTH OF SWAGE PER GROOVE #								TESTED	VIBRATION TESTED	VECTRONIC TESTED	HEAT TREATMENT TESTED	NO. OF LEADS	NO. OF VES	HEAT TREATMENT TESTED	COMMENTS	
					TOP LEFT → RIGHT				BOTTOM LEFT → RIGHT												
					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4									
22	1	.254	.207	.250	.223	.005	.004	.004	.003	.005	.004	.004	.003	.2198	x	x					
	2	.255	.208	.250	.223	.005	.004	.004	.003	.003	.004	.004	.003	.2196	x	x	x				
23	1	.253	.208	.250	.223	.005	.003	.002	.001	.005	.003	.002	.001	.2198	x	x					
	2	.254	.209	.250	.223	.004	.003	.003	.003	.004	.003	.003	.003	.2197	x	x					
24	1	.254	.207	.250	.223	.004	.003	.003	.003	.002	.004	.003	.003	.002	.2195	x	x				
	2	.254	.206	.250	.223	.004	.003	.003	.003	.002	.004	.003	.003	.002	.2197	x	x				
25	1	.254	.206	.250	.223	.004	.003	.003	.003	.004	.003	.003	.003	.003	.2197	x	x	x			
	2	.254	.206	.250	.223	.004	.003	.003	.003	.002	.004	.003	.003	.002	.2197	x	x	x			
26	1	.253	.208	.250	.223	.005	.004	.004	.004	.003	.005	.004	.004	.004	.2198	x	x				
	2	.253	.201	.250	.223	.005	.004	.004	.004	.003	.005	.004	.004	.005	.2196	x	x				
27	1	.253	.207	.250	.223	.005	.004	.004	.004	.003	.005	.004	.004	.003	.220	x	x				
	2	.254	.205	.250	.223	.004	.004	.004	.003	.003	.004	.004	.003	.003	.2197	x	x				
28	1	.254	.208	.250	.223	.004	.002	.001	.001	.001	.004	.002	.001	.001	.2196	x	x				
	2	.254	.205	.250	.223	.004	.002	.001	.001	.001	.004	.002	.001	.001	.2195	x	x				

*Sealing surface to left.

TABLE 2. (Continued)

RESISTOFLEX DYNATULE
MSFC TESTING

FITTING #	TUBE I.D.	TUBE O.D.	SWAGE TOOL SETTING	*DEPTH OF SWAGE PER GROOVE #								COMMENTS
				TOP LEFT → RIGHT				BOTTOM LEFT → RIGHT				
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4				
29	1	.254	.206	.250	.225	.005	.004	.004	.005	.004	.004	2209 X X
	2	.253	.206	.250	.225	.005	.004	.004	.005	.004	.004	2206 X X
30	1	.253	.208	.250	.225	.005	.004	.004	.005	.004	.004	2212 X X
	2	.253	.208	.250	.225	.005	.004	.004	.005	.004	.004	2211 X X
31	1	.253	.203	.250	.219	.001	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	216
	2	.254	.207	.250	.219	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
32	1	.254	.208	.250	.225	.005	.004	.004	.005	.004	.004	2206 X X
	2	.254	.208	.250	.225	.005	.004	.004	.005	.004	.004	2213 X X
33	1	.254	.204	.250	.225	.005	.005	.004	.004	.005	.004	2206 X X
	2	.254	.207	.250	.225	.005	.005	.004	.004	.005	.004	2206 X X
34	1	.254	.206	.250	.225	.005	.005	.004	.004	.005	.004	2209 X X
	2	.253	.208	.250	.225	.005	.004	.004	.004	.003	.003	221 X X
35	1	.254	.208	.250	.225	.005	.005	.004	.004	.005	.004	2208 X X
	2	.254	.206	.250	.225	.005	.004	.003	.003	.005	.004	2207 X X

*Sealing surface to left.

TABLE 2. (Continued)

FITTING	TUBE ID	SWAGE TUBE O.D.	TOP LEFT → RIGHT	DEPTH OF SWAGE PER GROOVE =				RIGHT	COMMENTS
				1	2	3	4		
36	1	25.3	206	.250	.219	.001	.000	.000	NO LEAK TESTED
	2	25.4	207	.250	.219	.001	.000	.000	NO LEAK TESTED
37	1	25.4	207.5	.250	.225	.005	.004	.004	NO LEAK TESTED
	2	25.3	.06	.250	.225	.005	.004	.004	NO LEAK TESTED
38	1	25.3	208	.250	.225	.005	.005	.004	NO LEAK TESTED
	2	25.4	207	.250	.225	.005	.004	.004	NO LEAK TESTED
39	1	25.3	207.5	.250	.225	.006	.005	.004	NO LEAK TESTED
	2	25.3	207	.250	.225	.006	.005	.004	NO LEAK TESTED
40	1	25.2	208	.250	.225	.006	.005	.004	NO LEAK TESTED
	2	25.3	207.5	.250	.225	.005	.004	.005	NO LEAK TESTED
41	1	25.35	206	.250	.228	.007	.007	.007	SWAGED SHOR (= 3 TOOL SET-UP)
	2	25.3	205	.250	.228	.007	.007	.007	SWAGED SHOR (= 3 TOOL SET-UP)
42	1	25.5	200	.250	.223	.007	.007	.007	SWAGED SHOR (= 3 TOOL SET-UP)
	2	25.4	203	.250	.228	.007	.007	.007	SWAGED SHOR (= 3 TOOL SET-UP)

*Sealing surface to left.

TABLE 2. (Continued)

FITTING #	FITTING I.D.	TUBE I.D.	Gauge	Tool Setting	DEPTH OF SWAGE PER GROOVE #							COMMENTS	
					TOP LEFT → RIGHT			BOTTOM LEFT → RIGHT		RIGHT			
					1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
4.3	1	.253	.204	250	.228	.007	.007	.000	.007	.007	.000	2236	x x x
	2	.255	.204	250	.228	.007	.007	.000	.007	.007	.000	2234	x x x
4.4	1	.253	.204	250	.228	.007	.007	.000	.007	.007	.000	2237	x x x
	2	.253	.204	250	.228	.007	.007	.000	.007	.007	.000	2236	x x x
4.5	1	.253	.205	250	.228	.007	.007	.000	.007	.007	.000	2236	x x x
	2	.254	.201	250	.228	.007	.007	.000	.007	.007	.000	224	x x x
4.6	1	.2535	.208	250	.228	.007	.007	.006	.006	.007	.006	227	x x x
	2	.254	.208	250	.228	.007	.007	.006	.006	.007	.005	223	x x x
4.7	1	.254	.208	250	.228	.007	.007	.006	.006	.007	.006	2228	x x x
	2	.207	.255	250	.228	.007	.007	.006	.006	.007	.005	2232	x x x
4.8	1	.2535	.209	250	.228	.007	.007	.006	.006	.007	.006	224	x x x
	2	.254	.2095	250	.228	.007	.007	.005	.005	.007	.005	2232	x x x
4.9	1	.255	.208	250	.228	.007	.007	.006	.006	.007	.006	2228	x x x
	2	.254	.2085	250	.228	.007	.007	.006	.006	.007	.006	2223	x x x

*Sealing surface to left.

TABLE 2. (Concluded)

APPROVAL

ASSEMBLY AND TESTING OF 1/4 INCH MR54040 TF04 RESISTOFLEX DYNATUBE FITTINGS

By J. H. Ehl

The information in this report has been reviewed for technical content. Review of any information concerning Department of Defense or nuclear energy activities or programs has been made by the MSFC Security Classification Officer. This report, in its entirety, has been determined to be unclassified.

P. H. Schuerer

P. H. SCHUERER
Chief, Process Engineering Division

R. J. Schwinghamer

R. J. SCHWINGHAMER
Director, Materials and Processes Laboratory